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“LITOTECA”: A NEW PROJECT FOR NETWORKING AMONG PORTUGUESE GEOPARKS

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Networking is one of the four essentials of UNESCO Global Geoparks (UGGp), together with geological heritage of international value, management and visibility; it is focused not only in cooperation with the local people living in the UGGp, but also in cooperating with other UGGp's, learning from each other and, as a network, increasing the recognition and value of this UNESCO label.

This networking purpose, applicable and disseminated both nationally and internationally, is the basis for this abstract, that presents an initiative among the Portuguese Geoparks: the production, exchange and use of a “LITOTECA” (meaning deposit/archive of rock samples) to support educational, scientific and dissemination/promotion of Geoscience initiatives.

The “LITOTECA” encompasses a representative rock samples collection of the geodiversity from each Portuguese Geopark territory and its geological history, prepared by each Portuguese Geopark staff and shared with the other territory, on an “one for all” basis. Easy to use, made portable and adequately prepared and labeled with a short ID, the geological samples are suitable to be used by the Geopark staff, but also their stakeholders on several activities and for different purposes, from educational activities, to general public sessions, and exhibitions.

The Azores UGGp “Litoteca” includes 12 samples that illustrate the lithological geodiversity of the Azores Islands, including ankaramite, surtseyan tuff, ignimbrite, trachyte, basalt, scoria, pumice, volcanic sand, syenite and fossiliferous limestone samples.

The rock collection of Naturtejo UGGp shows a good representation of the rock cycle, including 27 sedimentary (diamictites to epigenic limestones), metamorphic (pelitic hornfels to gnaisses) and igneous (S-type granites to dolerites) samples.

The Arouca UGGp “Litoteca” includes rock samples of conglomerate, carbonaceous shale, quartzite, slate, metaconglomerate, metagraywacke, black quartzite, quartzodiorite, as well as several granite samples, including the iconic Nodular Granite of Castanheira (“Pedra Parideira/Rocks Delivering Stones”).

The Terras de Cavaleiros UGGp collection is constituted by 12 samples representative of oceanic and continental lithosphere sequences and include dunite, serpentinite, gabbro, amphibolite, mafic granulite, and gneiss samples, among others.

The Aspiring Geopark Estrela also contributed to this networking initiative with a rock collection that includes about 30 samples of various granitic rocks, migmatite, dolerite, quartz, schists, shales, slates, hornfels, greywacke, phyllite, as well as glacialic sediments (till).